

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 AMMAN 02460 141356Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----101596 141404Z /42

P R 141316Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5430
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 2460

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PINT, JO, IS, PLO, XF
SUBJECT: JORDANIAN REACTION TO TERRORIST ATTACK ON ISRAEL

1. IN TALK MARCH 14 WITH COURT CHIEF SHARAF, HE INDICATED JORDAN DID NOT PLAN TO MAKE ANY STATEMENT ON RECENT TERRORIST RAID ON ISRAEL. HIS PERSONAL CONDEMNATION OF THE ACTION WAS CLEAR. HE INDICATED JORDAN HAD HAD ENOUGH OF ITS OWN PROBLEMS WITH PALESTINIAN TERRORISM TO REACT NEGATIVELY TO THE RAID. ON THE OTHER HAND, ALMOST ALL JORDANIANS SYMPATHIZED WITH THE PALESTINIAN ACTION IN ATTACKING THE ISRAELIS IN THE FACE OF BEGIN GOVERNMENT'S UNWILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER WEST BANK WITHDRAWALS OR "PALESTINIAN RIGHTS."

2. LARGE NUMBER OF JORDANIANS WE HAVE SPOKEN WITH, BOTH OF EAST BANK AND PALESTINIAN ORIGIN, HAVE EXPRESSED SIMILAR VIEWS. SHARAF CONCLUDES
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 AMMAN 02460 141356Z

THAT THE TIMING OF THE PALESTINIAN ACTION IS PREDICATED ON DOING WHATEVER IS POSSIBLE TO DISRUPT THE SADAT INITIATIVE. HE SAYS THAT HE FINDS IT IRONIC THAT EXTREMISTS IN BOTH CAMPS SHOULD BE ASSISTING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE OTHER--BEGIN BY REFUSING TO NEGOTIATE ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION AND THE PALESTINIANS BY HELPING TO DIFFUSE PUBLIC

OPINION AND PRESSURE ON BEGIN TO DO SO. HE ADDED THAT IT IS OBVIOUS ALSO, EVEN WITH HOLDING ON TO OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, ISRAELIS CANNOT GUARANTEE THEIR SECURITY.

3. SHARAF, AND HE TELLS ME KING HUSSEIN ALSO, IS EXTREMELY WORRIED ABOUT ISRAELI RETALIATION. THEIR REPORTS CONFIRM OURS OF ISRAELI LAND FORCE BUILD-UP IN THE NORTH ALONG THE LEBANESE BORDER. THEY BELIEVE RETALIATION IS FOREGONE CONCLUSION AND ONLY QUESTIONS NOW ARE OF TIMING AND THE TYPE OF RETALIATION THAT BEGIN GOVERNMENT WILL CHOOSE. WITH GROUND FORCE BUILD-UP THEY SUSPECT IT WILL INVOLVE LARGE-SCALE MOVEMENTS INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON. THEY ARE CONCERNED THAT IF SUCH MOVEMENTS GET OUT OF HAND, CONFRONTATION WITH SYRIANS MIGHT ENSURE AND LEAD TO A SPREADING CONFLICT WHICH WOULD SOONER OR LATER ENGULF JORDAN. THEY AGREE WITH US THAT SYRIANS SEEM TO WISH TO AVOID SUCH A CONTINGENCY, BUT DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IT IS COMPLETELY UP TO THE SYRIANS IN ANY EVENT-- ISRAELIS MISCALCULATIONS COULD WELL LEAD TO INADVERTENT CLASHES WITH THE SYRIANS.

4. SOME SENIOR JORDANIANS WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN BELIEVE THAT IF ISRAELIS RETALIATION RESULTS IN LARGE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES, AMONG LEBANESE AND PALESTINIANS, THIS WILL TO AN EXTENT REDRESS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 AMMAN 02460 141356Z

THE PUBLIC OPINION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BALANCE NOW SEEN TO BE MORE IN BEGIN'S FAVOR THAN BEFORE THE RAID. THEY ALSO SEEM TO FEEL THAT IF BEGIN CAN PULL OFF AN ENTEBBE-RAID SPECTACULAR, HE CAN FURTHER IMPROVE HIS PUBLIC POSITION AT THE EXPENSE OF THE ARABS AND THE U.S.

5. SHARAF ENDED OUR TALK BY PUTTING VERY STRONG EMPHASIS ON THE ENDURING NECESSITIES--THAT TERRORIST INCIDENTS OF THIS SORT MUST NOT BE PERMITTED TO INTERRUPT THE PEACE PROCESS AND DISTURB OR DERAIL THE U.S. ROLE. I CALLED TO HIS ATTENTION FACT THAT WE HAD COMMENTED PUBLICLY YESTERDAY ALONG SIMILAR LINES, PUTTING OUR EMPHASIS ON THE CONTINUING NECESSITY TO MOVE THE PEACE PROCESS FORWARD.
PICKERING

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, TERRORISTS, UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978AMMAN02460
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780113-0211
Format: TEL
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780373/aaaacjxl.tel
Line Count: 110
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6cfd5c7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3347165
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JORDANIAN REACTION TO TERRORIST ATTACK ON ISRAEL
TAGS: PBOR, PINT, PINS, JO, IS, XF, PLO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6cfd5c7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014